



NOTICE OF 30-DAY PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD
A Portion of the Former Columbia Phosphate Site
303 Gadsden Street, Columbia, South Carolina

DHEC (the South Carolina Department of Health and Environmental Control) is accepting public comments on a proposed Voluntary Cleanup Contract through September 28, 2011.

The Voluntary Cleanup Contract, 11-5708-NRP, will affect approximately 0.45 acres identified by Richland County Tax Map Serial Numbers R08913-04-02 and R08913-04-04. A company known as M&L Management Company, LLC ("M&LMC") wants to buy the property. This Voluntary Cleanup Contract will be between DHEC and M&LMC.

The property is located on the northwest corner of the intersection of Gadsden and Catawba Streets. The property is known today as Southeastern Electrical, which consists of two of the original three parcels that comprised the Columbia Phosphate site. Today the University of South Carolina Film Archives occupies the third parcel at 707 Catawba Street. From 1893 until 1920, Columbia Phosphate operated a sulfuric acid and superphosphate manufacturing facility. As a general practice, operations used acid chambers. When hot sulfuric acid was used, it leached metals from the lead chambers and pipes. Arsenic was leached from the phosphate rock. Often waste materials containing elevated concentrations of lead and arsenic were disposed on the property. The existing building on the property was reportedly constructed in 1954. Railroad lines lie north of the property. The immediate surrounding properties are generally in commercial / industrial use.

M&LMC intends to acquire the property and use it and the building for light manufacturing and for rental. If this Voluntary Cleanup Contract is implemented, DHEC will allow M&LMC to acquire the property as a "Brownfields Site" because of the potential for environmental pollution. M&LMC did not create the pollution, but will take steps to control it to keep the property safe for re-use.

DHEC will not hold M&LMC responsible for the pre-existing pollution in exchange for doing work under the Voluntary Cleanup Contract. Under State law, M&LMC will not be responsible if anyone is affected by the contamination. Entering into this contract does not reduce the responsibility of any former owners or operators of the site. Under the proposed contract, M&LMC will test soil and groundwater from the property. If significant contamination is found, M&LMC will be required to take additional steps to protect human health and the environment.

DHEC uses Voluntary Cleanup Contracts to keep Brownfield sites in productive reuse. The proposed contract is available at http://www.scdhec.gov/environment/lwm/public_notice.asp. Printed copies may be obtained from the DHEC Freedom of Information Office at (803) 898-3882.

Citizens may provide written, email, or telephone comments on the proposed contract through September 28, 2011. Questions or comments may be directed to Jo Cherie Overcash, Project Manager, email overcajc@dhec.sc.gov, telephone (803) 896-4019, or Alex Fulmer, email FulmerWA@dhec.sc.gov or TOLL-FREE telephone (866) 576-3432. Written comments should be directed to either individual at SCDHEC, 2600 Bull Street, Columbia, SC 29201.